St. Vincent's Bulletin

The Order of St. Vincent for Acolytes

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Affiliated with the Scottish Guild of Servers and
The British Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary

HEADQUARTERS — WASHINGTON, D. C.

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THE FESTIVAL Acolytes and Servers

Two festivals, (Spring and Fall) are increasing. The day and time a local matter requiring foresight, information long in advance about conflicting events, and climatic conditions. This is a special plea for two features. More publicity in newspapers within the area, so that more laymen will be informed. More attention given to the PROCESSION. We may be very frank. That is the special part the acolytes and servers "enjoy". A procession demands much study and planning. The hymns selected and the tunes used should be familiar. The time element important in favor of the best possible procession. The host parish will exert itself in giving the finest musical service possible, but make the procession a thriller. Then, if it comes towards the end of the service, conclude the service with Eucharistic devotions, or Te Deum. A plea, also, for entering and leaving without hymns. (If a special procession is scheduled).

SUMMER SERVING AND WORSHIP

The Rules of the Order demand all-the-year round serving and attendance at worship. We promised our Lord, when admitted, that He could depend upon us as witnesses. The Order represents a solid front of convinced and enthusiastic Christophers. The Lord's Service, in the Lord's House, on the Lord's Day, is the minimum rule no matter where an acolyte or server may be. He can find an Altar with the same enthusiasm as he does a fishing hole or a beach, and he gives the Altar the preference. The great acolytes are particularly thoughtful about the home daily services. Be great in God's sight.

SO MANY VARIETIES

True. Liturgical has become a common expression. It means that more people are interested in knowing more about approaching Almighty God through worship, and living it day by day. It has become a powerful movement influencing all religious groups. It is making changes everywhere. You may have felt its influence in your own parish. You may hear that it is "old English or Western or Eastern". It is like an old-fashioned growing pain. Remember this. The Church will live through it. It always has done so. Your part in it is important. You should know more about it. You should be intellectually interested in it. You should ask and read about it. Then you will be keen about acolyte meetings about the movement, and faithfully attend them. Your clergy can't begin to pass on all the wonderful details of the movement because you and people generally prevent him by your indifference. What can you do to help your clergy brings these matters to your attention? Why not approach the clergy and go into a huddle with them on the subject, and do something about it, and then back up your priest faithfully until his instruction programs are finished?

You will better understand about all the varieties and changes.

HOW A QUAKER BOY BECAME AN ENTHUSIASTIC CHURCHMAN

He had been reared the Quaker way. The rule of the home was that after breakfast, daily, everyone went to his room for a brief period of Bible reading and prayer. He was taught to think about, or meditate upon, what he read in the Bible. Then at 15 he broke away from the family tradition, and he was Confirmed. He seemed out on a limb, because he lacked direction, and he found that his Episcopalian friends did not have the same personal daily devotional traditions. One day he noticed an Episcopal book store. He entered and browsed around. He was thrilled by the books coming to attention. He had about $1.00 to spare for books. He bought a small devotional manual, THE PILGRIM'S PATH, and STALEY'S THE RITUAL REASON WHY (and he has them today after half a century). They opened up a new experience for him. He saved his spending

money, and often, thereafter, he went to that book store. The Holy Spirit led him into the Church, but he actually read himself into being a good Churchman, and probably a strongly convinced one. He became a strong defender of the Church, and exercised much influence among laymen. All acolytes and servers read.

Today there are parish libraries. Books and tracts are numerous. Why not form the reading habit, asking your clergy for books on subjects which interest you? Resolve to do some special reading during the Summer. Have you ever noticed the young men carrying Bibles and other books? Probably coming from one of the many study places. Yes, they are not Episcopalians, but they should shame them, because no Church in Christendom has so much reading matter to offer as our own, and we are indifferent to it. That is one reason why we lack enthusiasm, and God's work suffers or is taken away from us. Be intellectually curious.....How many of you have read the O.S.V. tracts? Why are there not more?

DISCIPLINE

The best discipline is self-discipline. Even pagan writers have noted, "Know yourself, discipline yourself, then, be yourself". The Book of Common Prayer gives minimum disciplinary regulations. You should read at least once a year pages XXVIII and XXIX. Also the EXHORTATIONS on pages 85 to 89. Then seriously apply them to your own life. The O.S.V. is a specially called and selected group of Confirmed persons who are supposed to be disciplined, self-disciplined. The important matter about the Holy Communion is not the hour at which it is offered, but YOUR DISCIPLINE APPROACHING IT, especially if you are to receive the Blessed Sacrament. Your proper PREPARATION, and equally important THANKSGIVING after.

We hear so much today about MANNERS. In movies, television, and cinerama, we are impressed, frequently, by the good manners of foreign children. If "Manners maketh the man" in other countries, they do here, also. More so in the Church, particularly, in the sanctuary, and about the sacristy, and where the acolytes and servers vest. Good manners, yes, culture, are largely considerations for God and others. They especially play a big part in our sacramental worship, prayer and sharing habits. The well mannered person firmly believes that God sees, that He knows, and he gets into the habit of acting and living automatically in God's Presence, whether in vestments or out of them. That O.S.V. medal is only an item, but our attitude towards it reflects our manners. The same may be applied to our vestments and all our serving. Sloppiness is a mark of our time. Some of the Apocrypha writers frequently tell us to "get wisdom". Today, they might suggest, work for and develop good manners.....

Occasionally, we are notified that an acolyte has been dropped because he has broken one of our main RULES...."that he serve in strict accordance with the desires of the Priest".....or because of the wrong kind of manners.....

CHECK THESE ITEMS

Since February 12, 1954 admission into The Order requires: Confirmed and 14 years of age. Faithful, dependent (minimum) monthly communicant. Positively at worship (with sacrifice) on Sunday. Dues 50 cents per year. You should be reported to the Council every February 1, with dues paid. If you miss you delay your receiving the Ten Year Silver Medal, which was cast, not for serving, but for TEN YEARS FAITHFUL SERVING AND BEING REPORTED AS SUCH AND PAYMENT OF DUES. We have affiliated over 1800 Chapters, but only 300 report to us and help us by paying dues. What we could do if more reported and paid dues!

THE MEMBERSHIP CARD

On the back is the record of dues paid, implying faithfulness, for ten years. Your card should be dated and signed every year. After ten years presented for the Silver Medal. 90% of all applications for silver medals are defective. Reports from Chapters have not been sent in; dues have not been paid; and friction results. The membership card should have equal rights along with motor licenses, and fraternal societies annual cards.

PILGRIMAGES TO OTHER CHURCHES

The larger populated areas offer many opportunities for frequent and regular visits to Churches. Pilgrimages should be organized and followed up. Our monastic houses should be included. Also Polish National and Greek Orthodox Churches. Every pilgrimage should include personal devotions. There is much to learn from pilgrimage contacts.

LAYMEN INTO PRIESTHOOD

Charles J. Wood, of Glasgow, Scotland, the moving figure founding the Scottish Guild of Servers twenty-six years ago, and since the Secretary-General, at the age of 63, on June 5, 1954, was made a Deacon of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, and he has since been made a Priest. At the affiliation of the O.S.V. and S.G.S., October 7, 1939, the O.S.V. Silver Medal was bestowed upon him as the sign of affiliation. The O.S.V. rates very high in Scotland, due largely

to his constant reference to us in The Scottish Server. He was succeeded by James W. Branson who is now in a theological school, also preparing for Holy Orders.

The Scottish Guild, in a country not much larger than one of our ordinary sized states, has an advantage over our vast membership distribution. Instead of the Council such as our own, the membership being localized to assure meeting attendance, they have The Guardians, eleven in number, one from each Fraternity like our local Chapter. Anyone desiring The Scottish Server may receive it by sending an international postal money order in the sum of 35 cents to Alex Morris, 308 Gilmerton Road, Edinburgh 9, Scotland.

THE GUILD OF THE SERVANTS OF THE SANCTUARY (English Guild)

The Server, the quarterly magazine of the Guild should be in the hands of more of our membership. It would aid both clergy and wardens in passing on articles of rich value, especially liturgical, Church Year, historical, and world wide news of the work of the Anglican Communion. The subscription four shillings per year, less than one dollar. Address W. Hare, 27 Elthorne Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, England. The Guild numbers over 9500 members, 17 Bishops, and 1469 Priests. Men and young men largely make up the membership, and the articles in The Server reflect the more mature readers. Both the English and Scottish Guilds are far ahead of the O.S.V. in their development of Ordination Funds to assist men preparing for the Priesthood. Both Funds are yearly vital objectives. Both Guilds do a great work with special chapters linking up members in the military service and merchant marine.

COASTAL CHAPTERS TAKE NOTICE

A list of Chapters along our Eastern and Western coasts has been sent to the English Guild. The Guild requests that its merchantile membership be welcomed, and if possible, given the privilege of serving when in port. They will identify themselves as affiliated members.

COLOR SCHEME FOR MEDALS

A request to the Council resulted in finding the color scheme suggested on September 15, 1915, by the founder of the Order, the late Robert T. Walker.

Up to four years, purple; five to nine, red; ten to fourteen, yellow; over fifteen white. Green for lay-associates; blue for Priest-associates. The Council commends this scheme, but does not make it official.

THE GUILD OFFICE

The inquiring reporter sent out a few "feelers" to Chapters widely scattered. The most distressing result was the information that The Office is rarely said. More than one replied that it had never been said. Recall that God sees; God hears; and God knows. The Office in the Manual may be led by a layman. If one or two Chapter members regularly, faithfully, make it part of their layapostolate to see that the Office is said, then, God will be glorified, and the Chapter and Order, singularly blessed. Chapter morale may be suffering from neglect of the vitamin Office.

Sunday after Sunday in half a dozen Eastern coastal parishes, such as St. Mark's, Locust St., Philadelphia, Evensong is gloriously offered. The attendance may not be great, but there is no diminution of magnificent worship honoring Almighty God. The result: Everyone going there is inspired. Our O.S.V. acolytes there can always be depended upon, many of them coming long distances. This may also be said of St. Luke's, Germantown, Philadelphia, where Francis H. Kent, one of the O.S.V. original Council, continues to serve, and the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, New York City, and The Advent, Boston. Probably, in many other places without the elaborate opportunities elsewhere.

THE GUILD OF SAINT PETER AND SAINT JOHN

For servers 13 years of age and under. What progress has been made? Considerable and meager. An increasing number of Chapters now see the wisdom prompting the change. The definite probationary training is producing fruit. Every boy is given the opportunity of learning how to serve. The testing proves his ability to cooperate; to be properly instructed; to learn how to serve reasonably well in every position; to learn the proper nomenclature, and also how to prepare for Holy Communion, and to give thanks after. If serving is a passing fancy he will quit. If not, he will continue and go into the Order at the age of 14. The Order has not been sold short.

The disappointment. Few are satisfied with the Massachusetts Server's Manual which we generously recommended. None, with the nomenclature therein. However, no more than five have submitted to us suggestions for a Guild Manual.

Until we have a Manual, the parochial rules are sufficient. The making of a Manual is a terrific job.

Members of the Guild should be reported on the Annual Report, and if the Order is to benefit, and the Bulletin is to be received, 25¢ dues per member should be sent in.

1954 A DIFFICULT YEAR

We ended the year with $20 in our treasury. A big supply of medals, to get them at the old rate, had to be purchased. All our guides, tracts, etc. had to be revised and re-printed. Fr. Beck, former Secretary-General, once a newspaper editor, now a member of the Council helped us by introducing us to offset printing. All through the year, we were "broke". The Acting Secretary-General had to be paid, and he did not take the full allowance. We did not print a Bulletin because we don't go into debt to serve ourselves. This is the first Bulletin since Trinity 1953.

We thank God for the faithful 300 Chapters year after year who lack "hurt feelings" and hold up our hands because they have the right heart and vision, and thoroughly believe in the great work God has asked them to share.

If 600 Chapters would report and pay dues the Order could be a powerful liturgical vehicle through printing alone. Both the Scottish and English Guilds have also felt the cost of printing.

THE SACRISTAN

The Sacristan's Handbook by Hermitage Day. 40 cents. 62 page. A Mowbray (English) publication. Order from Morehouse-Gorham Co.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED

The Eucharistic Church, by Patrick Cowley. A help to understanding the growth of the eucharistic Church. The development of the Church building, and general notes on eucharistic evolution. 175 pages $2.25.

At The Lord's Table, Cosslett Quin. A theological and devotional commentary on the Holy Eucharist according to the 1662 Anglican Rite. 227 pages $2.64 if imported from Ian Michell. He differs often with Dom Gregory Dix, O.S.B., and glorifies, as an Irish Priest, the current Book of Common Prayer, but his devotional notes on every part of the Eucharist are profound.

The Communion Fast. Rev'd. R. E. Coonrad, J.C.D. 35¢. The A.C.U. 347 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

The Training of a Server. H. Smith. 80 pages. English and strictly according to the Church of England Prayer Book. A suggested training course. Some good suggestions, but very English throughout. A Mowbray booklet from Morehouse-Gorham. $1.05.

The Words of Our Worship. C. E. Simcox. A commentary on the ecclesiastical language of the Book of Common Prayer. $3.50.

The Worship of the Church. M. H. Shepherd, Jr. Cloth $2.50. Paper $1.50. A simple guide to understanding the Prayer Book services.

The list supplements that in Bulletin No. 33. If accessible, visit a Church book store. So many books on ceremonial, Prayer Book revision, the Saints, history, and devotion.

ACOLYTE FESTIVALS INCREASE

From the Canal Zone, the Diocese of Los Angeles, Wichita Falls, Texas, and many other centers we have received announcements and folders. The "big one" in St. Mary the Virgin Church, New York City cannot get much bigger lest the walls bulge. The A.C.U. sponsored one in St. Luke's (Kensington), Philadelphia, and we note the growth of smaller regional services so that the smaller Churches may have the privileges.

A large festival certainly brings out a variety of serving vestments, and coloring, so much so that even some of the "old timers" are unable to answer why.

Keep this in mind. You may feel completely at ease serving or going to a festival with a plain black cassock and cotta. They are always in order, and always proper.

WHAT FESTIVAL PREACHERS SAY . . .

Attending several festivals. Hearing as many preachers, most of them have emphasized...

Serving is a call from God. Take it seriously. Be dependable. Be on time, and at least ten minutes before every service, vested, and ready. Your obligation is keeping appointments. Your sacrificial offering is getting up as an inconvenience on weekdays, and on Sundays, after an early Communion, returning for the late morning, and the evening services. Strict penitential preparation before Communion, and as strict thanksgiving after. Get over "hurt feelings". Be resourceful, but not officious. Obey.